A PRAGMATIC GLIMPSE AT LIMBU MUNDHUM

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The Limbu

The Limbu is one of the two main branches of the historic Kirat people inhabiting the major portion of eastern Nepal after the takeover by the Lichchhavi Kings around the beginning of the Christian era. The Limbus, one of the ethnic groups of Nepal, have their own distinct culture and oral literature. This ethnic group is spread in Taplejung, Panchthar, Ilam, and Jhapa of Mechi zone and Sankhuwasava, Tehrathum, Dhankuta, Sunsari and Morang of Koshi Zone, in eastern Nepal in the area of 16,358 square kilometer. This region historically known as 'Limbuwan' lies in the east of the Arun River and in the west of Darjeeling and Sikkim of India, in the north of Bihar, India and in the south of Tibet, China.

The Limbus have their own language which belongs to the Tibeto-Burman family. Limbu language is one of the major languages that are both spoken and written in Nepal. Limbu language has characteristics of pronominalization and comes under the Tibeto-Burman Himalayan language of the Sino-Tibet family of languages. The Limbus call their language 'Yakthungbapan' and their script 'Srijanga'. They designate themselves as 'Yakthungaba'. Yakthungabapan is spoken in the Limbuwan region; even the Chhetris, the Bahuns, the Magars, the Rais, etc. speak this language. This language is also spoken in Kathmandu. The Limbus of Sikkim, Darjeeling, Nagaland, Manipur speak this language. This language is further spoken in Hong Kong, Bhuttan and Burma. Surprisingly, although the Limbus live in different regions of Nepal and different countries, they still speak same Yakthungabapan; and there is a high degree of mutual intelligibility.

Mundhum

The Limbus have a distinct culture, tradition and religion, and are rich in oral literature of their own. They have a long tradition of narrating or reciting Mundhums and performing certain rituals and ceremonies in their own distinctive ways. A Mundhum consists of legends, folklores, prehistoric accounts, sermons and moral or philosophical exhortations in poetic language. So, generically it is a narrative oral poetry. There are several Mundhums. They are the sources of inspiration, information and enlightenment for the Limbus and the way of their life, customs, rites and rituals. They provide an insight into their inner complexity. Rituals, often regarded as sacred performances, provide the clue for the correct exegesis of the Mundhum and demonstrate their symbolic values, functional importance and social sequences. Each ritual action, instrument and fetish or object may have several meanings; and

without a long range of painstaking pursuit, it is not possible to get a comprehensive insight into it.

A Pragmatic Insight into Mundhum-texts

This article attempts to study Mundhum in relation to linguistics, putting it into a small domain determined by some properties of wider pragmatics and interpreting it from text linguistic perspective. A critical study (or a research) carried out from the text linguistic perspective assumes its object of analysis as a text. The text in general can be anything, written or oral, prose or verse, as defined by M. A. K. Halliday and Ruqaiya Hasan (1977:1) that 'the word TEXT is used in linguistics to refer to any passage, spoken or written, of whatever length, that does form a unified whole'. And, Oral Mundhum-texts here have been critically analyzed and studied with a pragmatic insight.

Walter J. Ong (1982) rightly writes "oral structures [oral Mundhum-texts] often look to pragmatics" (37); an oral Mundhum can certainly be best analyzed by the parameters of pragmatics. E. C. Traugott and M. L. Pratt (date?:226) in *Linguistics for Students of Literature* write:

> ... Pragmatics, the part of linguistics that deals with language use
> ... language use is governed by a wide range of contextual factors, including social and physical circumstances, identities, attitudes, abilities, and beliefs of participants; and relations holding between participants.

How oral Mundhum-texts are produced or composed, presented and received is also governed by 'a wide range of contextual factors', socio-cultural purposes, causes and effects; 'physical circumstances, identities, attitudes, abilities', beliefs of participants and their functional relations. The successful production, presentation and reception of oral Mundhum-texts depend upon how some of these factors operate in the principle of consensus in the actual context and how they are understood. For convenience, the term 'utilization' is here used to refer to mean the interdependently concurrent accomplishments of production, presentation and reception of a (Mundhum) text.

Traditionally Set Functional Positions of the Participants and the Rhetorical Repetition of Mundhum-texts as a pragmatic Discourse Structure

Utilization of a Mundhum-text traditionally involves a text producer and the receivers of two categories, the primary and secondary receivers who make the narration and the ritual practice of a Mundhum a distinctly interesting oral poetry that depends for its lively circulation on its recurrent composition-in-performance. They have been assigned traditionally set roles that are socially, culturally, and aesthetically significant; moreover, their performance has to do a semantic contribution to the intelligibility of the Mundhum-text and create a

sonorous, dramatic ambience for its successful production and reception in "the actual context" which, Teun A. van Dijk (1976: 192) writes, 'is defined by the period of time and the place where the common activities of speaker [the text-producer] and hearer [the receiver(s)] are realized, and which satisfy the properties of 'here' and 'now' logically, physically and cognitively'.

The text-producer is a shaman who, through memorization, composes a text in an actual context and is accompanied by others called *anglanggoba-sanglanggobas*, a Limbu phrase (meaning: accompanying friends). Oral composition of the cohesive text, the selection of its surface elements and the involvement of *anglanggoba-sanglanggobas* are traditionally necessitated integral components; all linguistic and paralinguistic factors, while utilizing a Mundhum text, come into simultaneous functions as determined by the canons of its set tradition. The *anglanggoba-sanglanggobas* canonically repeat the whole text produced by the shaman, who is the text-producer (TP) and their lead performer as well. The *anglanggoba-sanglanggobas* hence designate the primary perceivers (PR). For an instance, in the opening text of *Sam Sogha Mundhum* (narration and ritual practice of warding off the evil spirits of unnaturally dead people), the text producer narrates how mythical characters Lahathongna and Suhampheba committed an incestuous relation and the primary receiver(s) repeat the lines. X stands for repetition.

Text-I

1. TP: e-āllʌ -- samdzik   sam -u-m-lo
     O now – tradition/philosophy   sing/narrate -1-piADH-EMP
         Mundhum   sam -u-m-lo
         Tradition/narration   sing/narrate -1-piADH-EMP
   PR: x   x
            x   x
       'O-now – Let's narrate the philosophy/the tradition.'

2. TP: ʌkhe   sam –u-m-lo
     (such) news/message   sing/narrate-1-piADH-EMP
         tadzeŋ   sam -u-m-lo
         news/message   sing/narrate -1-piADH-EMP
   PR: x   x
        x   x
     'Let'sᵖⁱ sing such news or message!'

3. TP: e-unchon   luŋdhuŋ   po-khe –vaŋ
     o-in the past   Incestuous relation   comit-PST-SUB
     ka?i   po-khe-vaŋ
     incestuous relation   comit-PST-SUB.
   PR: x   x

x   x
'O-in the past – as incestuous relation was committed.'

4. TP: lahadʌŋna   nu   Suhampheba
      Lahathongna   and   Suhampheba
      luŋdḥuŋ   setne-si
      incestuous relation   broke-3dA
      ka?i   setne-si
      incestuous relation   broke-3dA.
 PR: x   x
      x   x
      x   x

'Lahathongna and Suhampheba broke (their) incestuous relation.'

Not only the text-producer and the primary receivers have got roles assigned by the set tradition but also the themes of the text are culturally and traditionally available and the purpose of utilizing it is also of a broad social and cultural significance. The narration and ritual practice of Mundhums are accomplished to meet wider cultural and religious necessities of the Limbu community. These necessities provide us with an insight into understanding the common spirit of the community; understanding their rites and rituals about birth, life and death; and understanding their concept about the creation of the universe, origin of creatures and human beings, geo-spiritual history and genealogy of the Limbus, etc.

For an instance, the most important cultural and religious ceremony of the Limbus is *Tongsing Mundhum*, an incorporation of various myths, legends, narrations and oracles that are closely related to the daily activities of Limbus, because they guide their social, ethical and religious concepts by shaping their behaviours and attitudes to birth, life, death and the universe in a distinct way. Its narration or recitation and dramatic performance are expected to bring peace, progress, prosperity and happiness in individual life, families and thereby in the whole community. Moreover, Tongsing is a ritual of creating an occasion of social solidarity, reconciliation, moral and psychological purification and strengths and also an occasion for correcting themselves from any deviation.

During the poetic narration and performance of Tongsing, there occurs a mystic communication between human beings, nature and various supernatural forces. The symbolic activities and material and their artistic presentation connote common social, cultural, religious and moral purposes and responsibilities of Limbus. Tongsing is a ritual to appease supernatural agents to avoid befalling distresses, disasters and other probable misfortunes. Various functional divinities are invoked or communicated to 'bestow a good harvest, better opportunities and prosperity and to ward off illness, difficulties

and natural calamities' (Subba 1995:156). It is also a ritual of continuing the socio-cultural properties, tradition and identities initiated by the ancestors; it is a ritual of ancestry worship, a formal ceremony for accepting and fulfilling various responsibilities. Furthermore, the recitation and performance of Tongsing Mundhum is also a lively practice of inheriting and enlivening the ideals about human life and death; it is 'a ceremony of formally segregating the paths and souls of dead persons and living ones ...' (Subba, 1995, 156).

The ritual performance and poetic narration of Tongsing underlies a classical concept of a whole: the beginning, the middle and the end. As an initiatory phase of ritual performance, shamans offer a sacrificial piglet, millet beer and a one-rupee coin to master spirit, *Mangmang Sire Kedhumma Sibhakyami Phokwama* (Spirit or Goddess of unruly power that protects and charges shamans with a kind of supernatural power and brings them in a trance) and invoke various other divinities. The major portion can be taken as the middle which gradually develops when the Mundhums of certain gods are recited for various purposes; it is rich in imagination and grand in the scale of narrating larger themes like how the earth, the sun, the moon, the stars, the ocean and aquatic animals, plains and mountains, rivers, forests, animals and birds were created; and eventually it centers around the human beings as the final creation of the creator God Porokmi Yamphami who followed the order of the Supreme God, Tageraningwaphu.

In this way, Tongsing Mundhum gives us a comprehensive insight into understanding the Limbu community from various angles, and likewise other Mundhums consist of different but complete events in themselves, which are related to various daily activities and religious and socio-cultural dimensions of the community. This truth entrenches an argument that the narrations and ritual performances of Mundhums are accomplished not in isolation somewhere in desolate forests but in front of a large audience, which is in principle the Limbu community itself; and hence, the whole community canonically designates the category of the secondary receivers, the ultimate receivers.

The social, religious and cultural interactions as such between the text-producer, the primary and the secondary receivers, with a principle of consensus incorporate together to bring out a Mundhum-text and display, in the actual context, a rhetorical mode of pragmatic discourse-structure that is rarely found during the composition and performance of any other oral poetry (it is not found in other oral literatures of other communities at least in Nepal, though there are many ethnic communities who are very rich in oral literatures of their own). It can be diagrammatically presented as follows:

Figure No. 1
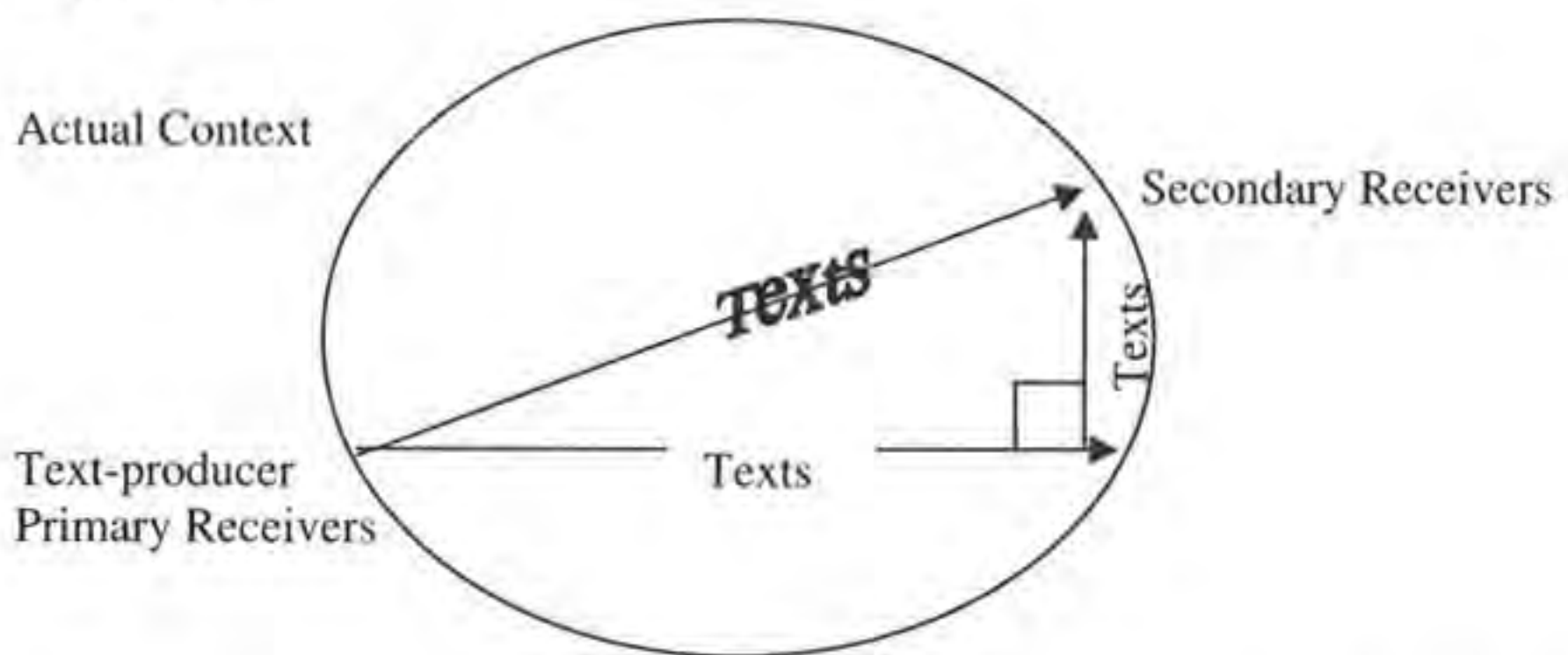
These paralinguistic, contextual relations and functional positions that can be observed in the actual context, on the spot and at the time of utilizing a Mundhum-text, contribute greatly to the easy and meaningful production, presentation, reception and penetration of the text. And, they unfold pragmatic nature of Mundhums, a unique pattern of rhetorical repetition that has got a semantic contribution and socio-cultural significance to the utilization of the text, and cohesive linguistic structures which are poetic and rhetorical in purpose and effect.

Mundhums demonstrate a pragmatic nature and demand a consummate knowledge of contextual functional factors and clear perception of them on the part of the receivers, especially the secondary receivers. Stephen C. Levinson (1983:7) overtly states pragmatics as 'the study of language [here, oral Mundhums-texts] from a functional perspective, that is that it attempts to explain facets of linguistic structure by reference to nonlinguistic pressures and causes'. As in the way of the geometric postulate of the Pythagorean theory, the pragmatic postulate, in the above discourse-structure and in the functional positions of the participants, is that the text-producer in the actual context is functionally at a longer distance from the secondary receivers than the primary ones who remain – in terms of making the utilization successful – functionally close to both the producer and the audience. Therefore, the primary receivers play a role very conducive to both parties, the text producer and the secondary receivers. In the following text of *Misam Sepma Mundhum* (Mundhum of killing the spirit of destructive fire), every line composed by the ·lead performer is repeated by primary receivers (PR). The symbol x stands for repetition of the preceding elements:

Text-II
1. TP: samdzik   sam –u-m-lo
       philosophy/tradition   sing-1-piADH-EMP

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    mundhum                sam –u-m-lo
    philosophy/tradition   sing-1-piADH-EMP
PR: x                 x .
    x                 x
   'Let sing the philosophy/tradition!'
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2. TP: samdzik   isikΛ mundhum   isikΛ
      philosophy/tradition true   philosophy   true
   PR: x   x   x   x
    'The true philosophy/the exact tradition'

3. TP: Λŋsuk   ser-e-ben
      destructive fire   spread-PST-DEF
      semi   ser-e-ben
      destructive fire   spread-PST-DEF
   PR: x   x
     x   x
    '(that) destructive fire spread (on the earth)!'

4. TP: sodhuŋ   ṭh-yaŋ-aŋ-gΛ
      Travelling/looking for   come down-1SG-PROG-EMP
      omu   ṭh-yaŋ-aŋ-gΛ
      looking for   come down-1SG-PROG-EMP
  PR: x   x
      x   x
    '(So) I came down (from Almighty's kingdom), looking for it,'

5. TP: tagera   iŋghΛŋ   niŋwaphuiŋghΛŋ
      Tagera   news/message   ningwaphu news
   PR: x   x   x   x
    'as it was the order/news of Tageraningwaphu (Almighty God).'

6. TP: midhuŋ   mukma-re   ceʔya   mukma-re
      Burning fire   spreading-caused by fire   spreading-caused by
   PR: x   x   x   x
    'Because of the spreading of the burning/destructive fire (on the earth),'

7. TP: hilli-aŋ   pe-ro   muni-aŋ   pe-ro
      memory-also went/lsot-ASS memory-also went/lost-ASS
  PR: x   x   x   x
   'people were baffled (memory also went/lost)/were in trouble.'

8. TP: tḥosu   cwat-lo   sadzu   cwat-lo
     Of above/Himalayan water-ASS of/from Himalayan water-ASS
   PR: x   x   x   x
     '(It is) the water from the Himalayas (in order to extinguish it)!'
9. TP: yosu   cwat-lo   gaŋga cwat-lo
     Indian Ocean water-ASS Gange   water-ASS

PR: x   x   x   x
     (It's) the water from the Indian Ocean (in order to extinguish it)!'

Here, the repetition of the text itself has a great significance on the ground that it offers an opportunity for the lead performer (or text-producer) in the actual context sufficient time for remembering next ideas or elements as stated by Ong (1982:40) that 'In oral delivery, ... it is better to repeat something, artfully if possible, rather than simply to stop speaking while fishing for the next idea'. Consequently, there is no break in the cohesion of the text and in the continuity of the sense it intends to convey—a functional (or a pragmatic) aspect of the act of repeating. This also makes the chanting of Mundhums sound natural and adds sonority to the immediate context of their utilization. This is an aesthetic contribution of the rhetorical repetition.

Furthermore, the artful repetition of the text by the primary receivers, as an ancillary device, also facilitates the secondary receivers, who are the ultimate receivers to perceive the cohesive texts clearly and to understand its content fully. As the secondary receivers consist of a large audience, the Limbu community, who incontrovertibly possess differing degrees of intelligence and comprehensibility, every element or word uttered by the text-producer is not equally comprehensible to every receiver, if only because of acoustical problems. Therefore, it is advantageous to repeat as exactly as what the text-producer utters. The repetition makes it easier for the audience to grasp what has been said and also gives the text-producer confidence that the message he is trying to communicate is well understood. Hence, the 'repetition of the just-said ... keeps both speaker [the text-producer] and hearer [the secondary receivers] surely on the track' (Ong 1982:40). It has been conducive to the semantic interpretation of the text on the part of the receivers and to the functional operation of all paralinguistic contextual factors, beyond the interpretation of the structural properties of the text, as well.

The practice of artful repetition of the Mundhum-text further contributes to the socio-cultural solidarity of the Limbu community and to the lively continuation of its socio-cultural tradition among and across generations. In fact, during the narration and ritual performance of Mundhums, a Limbu shaman who was an *anglanggoba-sanglanggoba* (a primary receiver) in the past has become a lead performer at the present. He is a link between the past and the present; he is a bearer and savant of the Limbu culture and social

tradition. He is a link, bearer and one of the participants in his cultural activities. He is both the performer and an audience, and his disciples (the primary receivers), after his death, will carry on his socio-cultural duties and responsibilities. Therefore, the producer of the oral Mundhum-text is a text-producer but merely in the actual context; as he belongs to the Limbu community that forms the secondary audience during the ritual performance, he is also a recipient of the culture and the long established tradition. He is also a listener or a recipient of the text that he has composed during the narration and ritual performance of a Mundhum. Regarding such oral composition [the utilization of the Mundhum-text], Ruth Finnegan (1977:53) opines that 'the performer [the producer of the oral Mundhum-text] as a recipient of the oral tradition: his role is merely to memorize and deliver to contemporary audience [the Limbu community]'. The text-producer who is a Limbu shaman has presented the Mundhum-text to the Limbu community through his memorization, and so will the present primary receivers do in the future. For this, the artful repetition of the text is an essential pragmatic aspect, because it has offered them an opportunity to memorize the lines of the text and have their indelible stamps in their mind so that they can continue the socio-cultural tradition of the community by re-producing the Mundhum-text in the future through memorization. And, in such consummate art of re-production lies the uniqueness of Mundhums and survives their orality, reflecting the sole spirit of the socio-cultural tradition and further strengthening and making it livelier. Therefore, the art of repetition has got a broad functional (or pragmatic) importance, beyond mere linguistic charms of the structures and beyond mere audible sweetness.

As it adds clarity and lucidity to the semantic territory of the text and as it facilitates both the text-producer and the text-producer and the receivers (pragmatic aspects), it is not a drab, monotonous repetition by the text-producer himself; instead, it is an ancillary device to the intelligibility and immediacy of the text in the actual context and rhetorical in its nature, purpose and effect; also Michael McCarthy and Ronald Carter (1994: 148) account such a repetition as 'a regularly recurring rhetorical strategy'. And as it also functions for the continuation and the enrichment of the Limbu socio-cultural tradition, it overtly divulges a motto of perennial creativity towards the wider socio-cultural context.

Moreover, the Mundhum-text itself is rich in cohesive linguistic structures that are poetic in characteristics and have a rhetoric poignancy which leaves a memorable consequence in the mind of the receivers, and that always create an ambience of the poetic freshness and immediacy of semantic conveyance. The artful, creative repetition of the lines of the Mundhum-text by the primary receivers itself is one of the cohesive devices. Furthermore, other remarkable properties such as parallelisms, lexical repetitions, and refrains provide structure and coherence to the Mundhum-text. The whole concept of the text

itself is based on the principle of repetition that is particularly striking when verbal, syntactic and metrical parallelisms and the patterns of lexical repetition are involved to a high degree but with a consistent variability. The first six lines of the Mundhum-text above are parallel in many aspects, and then the succeeding lines break this parallelism, but simply to continue another one. These parallelisms, consistent variabilities, and repetitions of the same words two times within a sentence make the Mundhum-text a good poem; make it a song that can be sung with musical instruments; make it a comprehensively communicative occurrence; every time bring newness to its utilization and make it memorable to the receivers.

Now it can be averred that the utilization of a Mundhum-text entails many contextual factors like the text-producer, the receivers, their performances and other nonlinguistic pressures and causes such as their functional relation, positions, duties and responsibilities, religious and socio-cultural purposes, causes and consequences, and so on; these various elements are concurrently operative; or they come into a simultaneous function that brings forth the acoustic verbal text which inherits traditionally and culturally inbuilt linguistic, rhetorical and poetic properties, and many other features of orality. Of the various factors, the text-producer and the receivers — while utilizing the text — have got distinctly unique traditional, socio-cultural and functional relations and operational positions that in turn provide the text with the artistic dimension of the rhetorical repetition, a distinct pragmatic device or a property of its utilization.

Dramatic Monologue as a Pragmatic Aspect and its Set Symbolic Connotations

Utilization of a Mundhum-text displays not only the pragmatic discourse-structure and the multi-dimensional rhetorical repetitions but also features of dramatic monologue that has got traditionally and culturally set symbolic connotations. The simultaneous narration and ritual performance of Mundhums bring forth a successful utilization of any Mundhum-text, and in that the text-producer, the audience/receivers, and their common activities which are satisfied by 'the properties of 'here' and 'now' logically, physically and cognitively' (Dijk, 1976, 192) are some of the operationally constituent elements o f the text. When the text-producer, who is a Limbu shaman, involves himself in a narrative enchantment and ritual performance of Mundhums, he dramatically, physically and verbally interacts with a large number of addressees; he speaks to them, communicates some information repeatedly to them and pleads them for some help, and so on. This interactive performance is symbolically and dramatically accomplished even in the absence of some of the addressees, which makes the text a piece of dramatic monologue.

There is a dynamicity of addressees as such in Mundhums, who can be broadly categorized into two types: the first type includes the real human beings, here the Limbu community, with whom the shaman communicates and interacts with physically in the actual context of performance; their cooperative activities and real voices can be observed with our optic eyes and heard with our sense of hearing, ears—physical circumstances. This category of addressees is the secondary receivers; and the second type of addressees includes other creatures and many natural objects which are addressed, treated and interacted with through an active, spontaneous deployment of the poetic devices like personification and animation. The shaman's enthusiastic involvement in the manifold interaction with the second type of addressees that includes various flowers, trees, rivers, Himalayas, places and animals remarkably creates a dramatic ambience, the spectacle of which comprises of the inviting movements and gestures that have symbolic significances. And, his acoustic verbal elements incorporate some features of 'dramatic monologue', a phrase applied to a poetic type initiated by Victorian English poets like Alfred Lord Tennyson who began it and Robert Browning who perfected it which M. H. Abrams (1993:48) defines as follows:

> A dramatic monologue is a lengthy speech by a single person ...
> (1) A single person, who is patently not the poet, utters the entire poem in a specific situation at a critical moment: ... (2) This person addresses and interacts with one or more other people; but we know of the auditor's presence and what they say and do only from clues in the discourse of the single speaker.

These features best characterize the actual context of utilizing a Mundhum-text; the text is like 'a lengthy speech by a single person', a lead performer who is a Limbu shaman; he 'utters the entire' text 'in a specific situation' that has been set by the socio-cultural tradition and that has been demanded by the collective attitude and common welfare of the Limbu community, or of a family. The chanting and ritual performance of Mundhums generally takes place 'at a critical situation' but within the traditional framework of cultural rites and rituals; for an instance, *Sappok Chomen* (pregnancy worship for safe delivery) *Mundhum* is chanted and performed partly at the house of the pregnant woman and partly on the bank of a river. This specific situation brings forth many materials and activities on its exposure: a symbolic bridge is constructed; pieces of fruits and morsels of foods are kept in a small piece of shard which is hanged over the symbolic bridge, and intestine of a chicken is stretched around it. And, the whole family is afraid that she is always at a critical moment until she has given birth to a baby. The shaman melodiously chants *Sappok Chomen Mundhum*, involves himself in series of friendly conversations with supernatural agents and symbolically acts that he has caught the wandering soul of the pregnant woman and brought it back into her

body, and the family feels that she is now saved. His chanting of the Mundhum and dramatic acts convey the traditionally and culturally set connotations of safe delivery, warding off the evil spirits, individual and family welfare, sharing and common concern with the critical state of the pregnant woman.

Furthermore, the shaman who is the text-producer (but only in the actual context) 'addresses and interacts with one or more other people', and specially when he 'addresses and interacts with' the second type of addressees, the Mundhum-text becomes a piece of dramatic monologue, and its situation is endowed with the consideration of many pragmatic factors such as the text-producer's symbolic activities, his dressings, facial expressions, many gestures, and whatsoever there are, which are, however, not free gestures and activities, instead dictated by the set tradition. And, 'we know of the auditor's presence', specially the second type of addressees, and 'what they say and do only from the clues' in the Mundhum-text of the shaman and from all his activities/performances that are satisfied by 'the properties of 'here' and 'now' logically, physically, and cognitively.' The closing section of *Sam Sogha Mundhum* (narration and ritual performance of warding-off evil spirits), which is called 'yaŋnoŋma' (a Limbu term, meaning 'act of returning'), invites us to look at it from pragmatic perspective, because the utilization of the following text is possible only when the shaman, assisted by his *anglanggobo-sanglanggobas*, addresses and interacts with a wide range of dynamic addressees:

Text-III

nā--	tikwasa-ma-e	khewasa-ma-e!
there (horizontal)	wild fowl-FEM-VOC	pheasant-FEM-VOC

'There, wild fowl and pheasant!'

....

allΛ—aniPi   aŋlaŋgoba-s-e   sanŋlaŋgoba-s-e!
now—wePi   anglanggoba-PL-VOC sanlanggoba-PL-VOC
'Now, anglanggoba-sanlanggobas (accompanying friends)!'

....

allΛ – la-dhe   mikkΛ   mu   ku-be   hΛnd-e-na!
now -- moon-of   eye   also   POSS-way   open-IMP-EMP
'Now, Eye of Moon also be open (Moon, open your eyes)!'
Nam-dhe   mikkΛ   mu   ku-be   hΛnd-e-na!
Sun-of   eye   also   POSS-way   open-IMP-EMP.
'Eye of Sun be open/Sun open your eye!'

....

e-- sammaŋ   kuru-s-e !
o-- goddesses/deities   guide/ teacher-PL-VOC

'O, goddesses teachers!'

    a-maŋ   kuru-s-e!

    My-goddess   guide/teacher-PL-VOC

'My goddesses, teachers!'

 allΛ   teŋgo   pond-i-ro

now leg   put/rest-piIMP-EMP

      yo-laŋ   pond-i-ro!/

    down ward-leg put/ rest-piIMP-EMP

'Now, let's rest (with the friends)!'

Mythical characters Lahathonga and Suhampheba in *Sam Sogha Mundhum*, which is a mythical narrative of evil spirits, committed an unpardonable sin of incestuous relationship. Then, the Almighty God, Tageraniwaphumang, ordered the gentlemen and intellectuals to separate them, and they tore a child into (two) pieces when they had quarreled over their children. The spirit of the child transformed itself into the various forms of steep, stony hills, and the pieces which they had thrown down on the earth joined together to grow up as a big tree that, latter on, became the nest of the eldest vulture. The vulture killed the people of Yethang Village that symbolizes the earth. The sprits of untimely killed people became *Soghas* (evil spirits) that brought a great chaos and disaster to the world. As soon as the chaotic hubbub from Yethang Village reached the kingdom of God, Tageraniwaphumang (Almighty God) sent shamans, who are called Yebas and Sambas in Limbu, in order to rescue the people by chasing and killing the mischievous spirits. These mythical narrations and events are still chanted lively and performed dramatically in the Limbu community. The shamans first persuade the evil agents and then chase them out of the earth (the human world). They chase them up to the border between two worlds – the world of mankind and the world of supernatural beings, and return to the spot (actual context) where the narration and ritual practice are being performed. From the clues in the Mundhum-text and the dramatic performances of the shaman on the actual spot, it is felt and comprehensively understood that the shaman is persuading the spirits, now chasing them, now have reached the border between the two worlds, now traveling across various places while returning, now have come back to the actual spot, etc. These various pragmatic factors and the verbal elements that have the nature of dramatic monologue incorporate together to determine a complex system of interdependency for the emergence of the Mundhum-text itself on the one hand, and on the other they convey the traditionally and culturally set connotations that the Limbus believe in the supernatural power, carry out various rites and rituals for their common welfare, have their own mythology that influences and guides their daily lives, have their own geo-

poetic space which is related to their origin, their genealogy and also to the Kirant Kingdom in the past, etc.

In the text above, a beautiful landscape, full of thick and green forest, where the performer and the wild birds (wild fowls and pheasants) do friendly talks can be well envisaged. The performer requests them to mislead the mischievous agent (evil spirits) by scratching out the dust. Here, it is traditionally and culturally set that the shaman must come across the domain where pheasants/wild fowls help him; he cannot choose other birds like a dove, or a woodpecker. There is a consistent change of addressees; the performer is seen and heard talking to various co-workers (like birds in the distant imaginary place/world and his accompanying friends in front of him in real world). The degree of excitement and awesome feeling in the visual spot where the performer and accompanying friends act as if they were traveling from the world of evils across the human world reaches a high degree when the lead performer addresses his *anglanggoba-sanglanggobas* who have been entranced and enchanted and by a magic or supernatural power to travel like a clay-pellet thrown away from a bow. Other addressees are the sun, the moon, and goddesses who help the shamans chase the evil spirits out of the human world; there is an esoteric communication; there is a mystic union between human beings and nature. Along with the rapid change of addressees, they travel across various locations that range from the beautiful Himalayas and steep hills, green forests, rivers, several kinds of mining-places, etc. The addressers (performers) and the addressees are supposed to interact cooperatively in those different places. That friendly interaction can be envisioned as soon as the addressers' dramatic performance has been observed and the concurrent narration has been heard. Ultimately, they are seen addressing the actual audiences (human addressees, the first type). In the following text extracted from *Sasik Mundhum* (narration and performance of warding off evil spirits of untimely dead infants), the addresser/text-producer addresses first the evil infant-spirits and then asks the human agents to tie the symbolic cradle in which an image of human is kept. The poetic text creates a dramatic ambience.

Text-IV

1. e-allʌ – kedzoŋgen   sammit paŋkhen wahit
   O now – flying/storming wind   heavy   rain
        ke-boŋ   ke-bek-pa-ha!
        3p-become/transform   3p-become/transform-PST-PL
'O, now you (have become)/transformed yourself into storming wind,
(you have become) heavy rain!'

2. khen-i   abu   pendisa   yaŋdaŋ-sasi
   you-PL   baby   children   small-babies/infants
        sʌsik yoŋdoŋ   sa-ha-re(n),

evil   dead   baby/spirit-PL-POSS
cemphondiŋ he?kwa   thok-ma
soft   liquidified rice cook-INF
cemphondiŋ kwadik   thok-ma
soft   liquid   cook-INF

'O, (you) small children/infants! Evil spirits!
(in order) to cook your soft rice (and to boil/cook) your liquids,'

3. kʌ?yo – phudzumephube   kere-ro.
   here -- pot(soil pot/shard)   be kept-ASS.
            kudhakso   thakso   mencham cʌ?it-tin
            Really exact perfect human   image-DEF
     e-e -- ke-yakna   phekwa   abu-setlon kere-ro
     O O -- 3SG POSS-sleeping   cloths   baby-cloths be kept-ASS.

'(a) pot is kept here. Really the true/exact human image (idol)!
O, your cloths (for you to sleep) are are (also) kept here.'

4. allʌ – abunayaŋdaŋ sʌsik   yoŋdoŋ   sa-ha-re.
   now – (baby) cradle evil   dead   infant-PL-POSS
           hukso-e   taŋ-e   khek-ku-m-lo-hei
           hand-with   rope-with tie-1-pi ADH-VOC-EMP

'Now, let's tie (this) cradle of evil infants (from all directions) with (this enchanted) rope!'

Endowed with dramatic vividness, the utilization of the Mundhum-text distinguishes a dramatic monologue in its characteristics and engages everyone in beholding the dynamicity of addressees and the text-producer's enthusiastic involvement in mutually cooperative interactions with them and in pondering over their connotations that Limbus believe in the systems of animism and naturalism. As reflected by the philosophical idealism, social, cultural and moral activities and responsibilities that have been embedded in Mundhums, there has been a long establishment of religious, spiritual and moral relationships between the Limbu community, nature and other creatures.

Moreover, the Mundhum-text consolidates itself as a piece of oral text only at the cost of the dramatic accomplishment of the symbolic interactions between the text-producer and the wide range of addressees that include both the personified and the human participants. And, the text-producer's dramatic interactions with specially the second type of addressees, nonhuman agents, make it a piece of dramatic monologue that unfolds meanings within its own tradition and socio-cultural context. The utilization of the text depends more on the action words such as 'performance', addresses' and 'interactions', their concepts and significations. These are preponderantly the contextual factors and create the environment of freshness, immediacy and alertness; without

dramatic performance, only the verbal elements cannot bring the text in its existence. So, in the words of McCarthy and Carter (1994: 67):

> The extract [the Mundhum-text] is what we might call a 'language-in- action' text. A number of the words in the text are of the types that need an understanding of the entities and locations in the immediate environment (*that, here, there,* the *other* ...) ... a heavily context-dependant text; its coherent development depends on a common understanding of the entities and events in the environment where the speakers are.

The successful utilization of the text, on the part of the audiences, first necessitates a sharp apprehension of the contextual factors as such, which provide us with an inlet to the symbolic terrain of all the socio-cultural factors and also an insight into exploring their meanings, influences and immediate effects on the participants, here the Limbu community.

The pragmatic factors that be either literal or symbolic, real factors or imaginary, dynamic addressees through personifications and animations or real human beings, contextual elements of broad socio-cultural purposes, causes and effects all come into a simultaneous operation for the successful utilization of the Mundhum-text; there is a complex relationship of a number of pragmatic factors that form real texture of the text; the dynamic addressees constitute essential texture because the text emerges when the performer addresses and interacts with them. Moreover, the functional, traditional and socio-cultural relationships between the text-producer and two categories of addressees, their purposeful, persuasive and cooperative interactions through poetic language and dramatic performances which incorporate to form an inviting spectacle—the spellbinding inescapability that opens up with the dramatic monologue—provide a rhetorical discourse-structure to the text; these 'non-linguistic pressures and causes', and linguistic and paralinguistic elements operate together to determine its texture.

Conclusion

A Mundhum-text is culturally and traditionally a communicative occurrence. The phrase 'Utilization of the Mundhum-text' here signifies its successful production, presentation and reception in the actual context through traditionalization, a process of making potential knowledge currently active into the set tradition of the community. The text-composer and the audience/the receivers (the primary and secondary receivers) have got traditionally and culturally assigned roles; when they carry out cultural and traditional duties and fulfill their cultural responsibilities, the Mundhum-text comes into its audible existence; its composition is necessitated by the traditional and cultural purposes, causes and effects in the Limbu community.

In the actual context of utilizing an oral Mundhum-text, without a simultaneous operation of all the pragmatic factors like the text-producer, the receivers, symbolic and mutual cooperation and interaction between human beings, nonhuman agents and nature, the text does not emerge in its audibility; all the contextual factors along with broad traditional and socio-cultural elements designate its texture; they form the 'texture', the 'properties of being a text' (Halliday and Hasan, 1977, 2). This shows that the narration and performance MUST be accomplished concurrently; the Mundhum-text does not exist simply in the act of melodious chanting, nor does it emerge out of (ritual) performance only.

To sum up, there is a highly developed, complex and pragmatically oriented system of textually in an oral Mundhum-text in terms of its linguistic and rhetorical structure, which has been referred to as a pragmatic structure in this study. The inbuilt information structure of an oral Mundhum-discourse creates its own pragmatic context and texture. The oral Mundhum-text is the mélange of aesthetic and socio-cultural function to which it is employed. Moreover, it is, Abhi Subedi (2000:23) writes, 'a very curious blend of ritual and poetry, nature and human beings and more importantly, a mystic union between aspirations and nature'.

Abbreviations
1=first person
3=third person
A=agent
ADH=adhortative
ASS=assertive
d=dual
DEF=definite article
EMP=emphatic (particle, verbal suffix)
FEM=female/genitive
IMP=imperative
INF=infinitive
p=patient
pi=plural inclusive
PL=plural
POSS=possessive
PROG=progressive/present gerund
PR=primary receiver(s)
PST=past
SG=singular
SUB=subordination
TP=text-producer
VOC=vocative
x=repetition of the preceding elements

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